

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SAB-01

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 019370

E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

FOLLOWING EXCHANGE TOOK PLACE AT DEPARTMENT'S NOON
BRIEFING JANUARY 26:

Q: THERE'S A REPORT ON FBIS SAYING THAT AGREEMENT HAS
BEEN REACHED--A COMPROMISE AGREEMENT--ON TURNING OVER THE
PANAMA CANAL IN FULL SOVEREIGNTY BY 1995. CAN YOU
COMMENT ON THAT?

A: NOT REALLY. WE HAVE HAD OTHER REPORTS IN THE PAST ON
THIS AND I WOULD REPEAT TODAY WHAT I HAVE SAID IN THE

PAST: WE ARE STILL IN THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS, AND OUR
PRACTICE HAS BEEN NOT TO COMMENT ON THESE DETAILS UNTIL
THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE CONCLUDED.

I WOULD REFER YOU TO A STATEMENT THAT AMBASSADOR BUNKER
MADE SEVERAL DAYS AGO ON THE STATUS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

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Q: THIS IS A STATEMENT BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF PANAMA,

AS I UNDERSTAND IT.

A: WHAT WAS BROUGHT TO MY ATTENTION WERE REPORTS IN THE PANAMANIAN PRESS.

Q: THIS WAS IN THE COURSE OF AN INTERVIEW HE GAVE ON A TELEVISION PROGRAM IN COLOMBIA.

A: I AM STILL NOT GOING TO COMMENT ON THE DETAILS OF OUR NEGOTIATIONS UNTIL THEY ARE COMPLETED.

Q: DO YOU HAVE A DATE FOR BUNKER'S RETURN TRIP TO PANAMA?

A: NO, I DO NOT. I WILL CHECK INTO THAT AND SEE IF IT HAS BEEN FIXED. KISSINGER

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